

# LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES LESSON PLAN

## TITLE

**Cockney English**

## TOPIC

Cockney accent and Cockney rhyming slang: history, phonetic features and examples.

## TYPE OF SCHOOL AND STUDENTS' AGE

3<sup>rd</sup> year of Liceo Scientifico, end of April. 17-year-old students.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (language lab, multimedia lab, blended learning, online learning, flipped classroom)

The explanation of the topic can take place in class with a interactive multimedia whiteboard and internet connection. The test needs to take place in a language lab or in a multimedia lab, since each student needs to work on their own computer.

## LEARNING AIMS

The aim of the lesson is to make students aware of the existence of different accents and vernaculars of English language. In particular, they will focus on Cockney English, spoken in London, comparing it with the standard British accent they have learned so far. Consequently, they have the opportunity to implement their knowledge about English culture and improve vocabulary, oral skills and listening skills. Also, technological skills are improved, since the material needed to study is meant to be shared on a multimedia platform and the final test will be online. As a prerequisite, students must know phonetic signs. The lesson is thought for students working both individually and in groups, depending on the necessities and the response of students themselves.

## TOOLS CHOSEN (Hardware & Software, Web 2.0 tools, Online Resources, etc.)

The main tool for this lesson is a Power Point presentation, which synthetically shows all the most important information. This part was created selecting the most important parts of specific high-level books about this topic and on-line material. This presentation also requires an active role of the students, since two videos are included, created with Free YouTube Downloader, followed by some questions and activities to check listening comprehension. In addition, a hyperlink to Google street-view of a part of London, connected with Cockney, is included into the Power Point to arouse students' curiosity and motivation. Finally, a test formed of some short-answer questions, multiple-choice questions and a crossword was created for the assessment using Hot Potatoes. The hyperlink to the test is included into the Power Point.

## METHODOLOGY AND TEACHING PROCEDURES

The lesson is approached to with an inductive method: in fact, students are not simply given new

pieces of information in a passive way, but they are asked about previous knowledge to get the meaning of new information and they are presented new topics starting from examples taken from authentic material.

Lesson contents can be divided into two parts: Cockney accent and Cockney rhyming slang. Each part will be presented following some stages:

- Warm-up. Before presenting the topics, students will be asked what they already know and what they think about the general theme of the lesson. For example, they could be asked what they know about London, what they have already visited, whether they have ever noticed some differences in pronunciation, what a rhyme is and what slang is. Also, the use of maps and street-view has a twofold aim: on one hand it can arouse students' motivation, on the other hand it can be a pretext to start a dialogue with the class and get aware of their previous knowledge.
- Presentation. With the support of a Power Point presentation, students are given main information about the new topics, which can confirm or confute their initial hypothesis. For example, a synthetic presentation of the history of Cockney accent and rhyming slang and the main phonetic features is offered. These parts are not just passive, but they are preparatory to the following practical activities.
- Practice. Students are asked to watch two videos about Cockney accent and rhyming slang and listen carefully, since they will have to answer some questions to check listening comprehension. The new information previously presented should guide them and draw their attention to the most important parts, which they will be asked about.

The activities presented in the Power Point presentation make it a versatile tool for different kinds of lesson. In fact, the listening activities can be carried out by students individually, or they can form small groups and work together to get as many correct answers as they can. They can also setting up a sort of listening competition with the other groups. The choice between what kind of lesson should be carried out depends on the characteristics of the class: whether individual listening skills or cooperative behavioural skills need to be increased.

The material used in class is meant to be shared on an on-line platform (Edmodo, Wikispace, Gmail), so that students can study and practice at home with a view to doing a test.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES

What the TEACHER does	What (individual) STUDENTS or GROUP OF STUDENTS do
<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- selects the most significant parts of the material about the topics in order to create a synthetic explanation using Power Point;</li> <li>- looks for interesting authentic material, in this case videos, maps and hyperlinks, to include into the Power Point</li> </ul>	<p>In case of individual kind of lesson, each student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- gives contribution and shares his/her knowledge answering teacher's questions about personal experiences and personal thinking;</li> <li>- listen carefully to the teacher's explanation and takes notes;</li> <li>- listens carefully to the videos presented by the teacher, answers the listening comprehension and pays attention to the correction;</li> <li>- feels free to express his/her doubts and counts on</li> </ul>

<p>presentation, in order to make it more stimulating and interactive to the students;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- decides whether make the students work individually or in groups, after observing their ways of learning;</li> <li>- presents the topic starting from the examples and the authentic material, in order to arouse students' interest and thinking process;</li> <li>- asks students questions about the topic, in order to elicit their previous knowledge, also with a brainstorming activity, to elicit them to give their personal contribution, to co-build new knowledge, to establish a dialogue with the class and create a relaxed atmosphere;</li> <li>- corrects errors just when they compromise communication, since the dialogue is mainly a way to build and share knowledge in this kind of activity;</li> <li>- uses videos both to improve listening skills and cultural knowledge;</li> <li>- undertakes the role of a guide and offers his/her help;</li> <li>- shares the material on a multimedia platform, which can help him/her monitor all students' work at home.</li> </ul>	<p>teacher's help;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- makes the effort to use simple technological tools and online resources to study.</li> </ul> <p>In case of a lesson carried out with group activity, students also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- are divided into heterogeneous groups of about 4 people;</li> <li>- decide the role of each member (one takes notes, one presents what the group has worked on...);</li> <li>- help other members and ask for help if they need;</li> <li>- undertake a cooperative behaviour;</li> <li>- start a pacific and positive competition in carrying out listening comprehension activity;</li> </ul>
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#### ASSESSMENT (weak and strong points, learning added value)

In a second moment, a formative test is meant to take place: students must do it individually, since their knowledge about the history of Cockney accent and rhyming slang are assessed. The test consists in two parts: a quiz with multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions to check general theoretical notions, and a crossword to check the knowledge of rhyming slang expressions. It is an on-line test created with Hot Potatoes: students must do it in a pre-established time and they have the chance to ask for some tips.

Learning Object Assessment

Strong points:

- it is an opportunity to talk about a topic of English culture which is rarely dealt with in class and analyse it thoroughly in few lessons, thanks to the use of simple, user-friendly and efficient technology;
- the use of technological tools, coloured images, authentic material, such as videos and street-views, is a powerful strategy to draw the attention of everybody, especially of those students who get easily bored with the traditional frontal and passive approach, which may get extremely boring and totally inefficient when talking about phonetic;
- the use of dialogue and videos allows a more relaxed atmosphere and the participation of everyone to the task;
- the versatility of the Power Point presentation allows the possibility to set up different kinds of lessons, depending on the characteristics of the class;
- the possibility to work in groups allows students to help each other, create cooperative situations, boost correct social behavior, and it can start a sound competition among groups.

#### Weak points:

- the explanation presented in the Power Point presentation might be too synthetic and students may find it hard to study only on this material; on the other hand, it is a selection of high-level material, which would be too difficult for them to understand;
- students might have difficulties with phonetic signs, since not all the teachers deal with them (even though the class I want to present this project to has learnt phonetic signs at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> year and are continuously reminded of when they find new words);
- watching a video where two different accents are used might get them confused, especially those who have weak pronunciation competences;
- students used to a traditional teaching approach may find it difficult to work in groups for the first time; in this case teacher will opt for individual activities.